

TOWSON BANK
ROBINSON'S

What is believed to be a remenant of Towson's only known Romanesque Revival building, the Towson National Bank 1887, is incorporated into this 1930's liquor store. The art-deco design of the store and the very particular purpose it has served for almost thirty years make it of interest as well.

MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST

BA - 1458

MAG1-0314584611

INVENTORY FORM FOR STATE HISTORIC SITES SURVEY

1 NAME

HISTORIC

~~Robinson's Liquor Store~~ Towson Bank

AND/OR COMMON

Robinson's Liquor Store

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

510 York Road

CITY, TOWN

Towson

___ VICINITY OF

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

STATE

Maryland

COUNTY

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY

___ DISTRICT

☒ BUILDING(S)

___ STRUCTURE

___ SITE

___ OBJECT

OWNERSHIP

___ PUBLIC

☒ PRIVATE

___ BOTH

PUBLIC ACQUISITION

___ IN PROCESS

___ BEING CONSIDERED

STATUS

☒ OCCUPIED

___ UNOCCUPIED

___ WORK IN PROGRESS

ACCESSIBLE

☒ YES: RESTRICTED

___ YES: UNRESTRICTED

___ NO

PRESENT USE

___ AGRICULTURE

☒ COMMERCIAL

___ EDUCATIONAL

___ ENTERTAINMENT

___ GOVERNMENT

___ INDUSTRIAL

___ MILITARY

___ MUSEUM

___ PARK

___ PRIVATE RESIDENCE

___ RELIGIOUS

___ SCIENTIFIC

___ TRANSPORTATION

___ OTHER:

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

Mr. Siganos

Telephone #: 823-3322

STREET & NUMBER

510 York Road

CITY, TOWN

Towson

___ VICINITY OF

STATE, zip code

Maryland 21204

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE.

REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

New Courts Building

Liber #: See Attachment

Folio #:

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

Towson

STATE

Maryland

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

DATE

___ FEDERAL ___ STATE ___ COUNTY ___ LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

STATE

7 DESCRIPTION

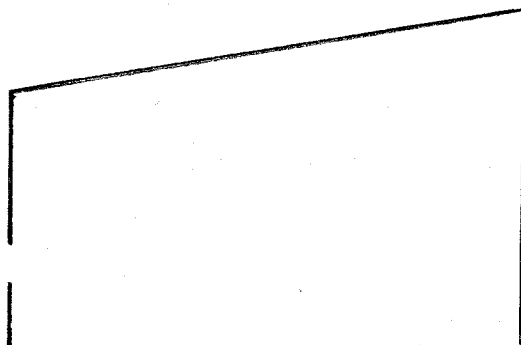
BA-1458

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		DATE Summer, 1978

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

There are two primary reasons for seeing this building as significant. One is that its oldest portion may be part of the old Towson National Bank and the other is that the liquor store itself has both architectural and historical interest.

Robinson's may be seen as consisting of two distinct parts. The eastern portion is the older of the two and is constructed of stone. On the exterior of the south facade one can see coursed stone with beaded grouting that is colored to look like sandstone (repointing?). An interior flue chimney with a brick cap can be seen here as well. This older portion of the building is only a single story in height although there is a full cellar. The walls of the cellar are made of very rough uncoursed stone. The distance between the joists and floor is 7'. The cellar, like the main level, consists of an old and new part. The old part is characterized by its odd shape caused by the obtuse angle in the north wall.



The break in the north wall corresponds with the odd shape of the adjacent movie theatre and is some evidence that the movie theatre was built around this building at a later date (see current tax map 70A).

In the cellar one can see transverse joists (circular sawn) that are 3" thick and 12" wide. They are lap joined to a longitudinal beam measuring 8" x 8". It is supported in part by a centrally located brick pier. (cross-bracing along the south wall contains wire nails). The wall dividing the west end from the east is 22" thick and is an original end wall (construction of the liquor store extended the building c. 12' to West).

On the main floor of the stone portion of the building there is little original fabric although a nice pressed-metal ceiling remains. The pattern is that of inset squares with a simulated egg-and-dart cornice. There is a skylight in the single room of this portion and it contains the same pressed-metal pattern only in a reduced size.

The title search, structural analysis and early photographs of the Towson National Bank suggest that this older portion of Robinson's is a survivor of that 1880's Romanesque Revival building.

The newer portion of Robinson's is noteworthy as well. One of the major events in United States socioeconomic history was the era of prohibition

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

which lasted and perhaps characterized the 1920's. It was repealed in the 1930's and Robinson's liquors was built not long thereafter. Robinson's was designed as a liquor store, a type of building which probably had not been designed much since the end of World War I and which exhibits stylistic elements peculiar to its period, namely art-deco.

The exterior of the shop is exposed only to the street. This west facade has an ochre colored corrugated brick veneer. It is characterized by its parapet (one of several in Towson) and a glass sign incorporated into the wall which says "Beer, Wine, Liquors" spelled out in typical art-deco lettering. A smaller sign above this one identifies this building as the location of a wholesale liquor dealer.

Opaque peach colored glass frames the entrance along with aluminum trim. These materials give the facade the machined glossy and streamlined look that art-deco promotes. Immediately above the door, which is flanked by display windows, is a glass panel with sculptured letters that are 16" high and spell "Robinson's." A later, but antiquated, neon sign with the same information is suspended over the entrance at a 90° angle to the building.

The entrance has side lights that contain frosted glass with deco patterns incorporating motifs relative to liquor (bottles, etc.). The interior is typified by the blind wood paneling throughout and the built-in recessed shelves and display cases. These geometric recesses are part of the rounded and streamlined appearance of the cornerless room. Stainless steel (polished aluminum?) trimming helps celebrate the grand age of technology as much as the liquor motif of the entrance celebrates the end of prohibition.

8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD		AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)	
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION			

SPECIFIC DATES 1887/1930's

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

What is believed to be a remnant of Towson's only known Romanesque Revival building, the Towson National Bank 1887, is incorporated into this 1930's liquor store. The art-deco design of the store and the very particular purpose it has served for almost thirty years make it of interest as well.

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY _____

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

See Attachment

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE

COUNTY

STATE

COUNTY

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

WAYNE L. NIELD, II
HISTORIC TOWSON, INC.

ORGANIZATION

DATE

STREET & NUMBER

TELEPHONE

CITY OR TOWN

STATE

The Maryland Historic Sites Inventory was officially created by an Act of the Maryland Legislature, to be found in the Annotated Code of Maryland, Article 41, Section 181 KA, 1974 Supplement.

The Survey and Inventory are being prepared for information and record purposes only and do not constitute any infringement of individual property rights.

RETURN TO: Maryland Historical Trust
The Shaw House, 21 State Circle
Annapolis, Maryland 21401
(301) 267-1438

INTRODUCTION

The three recordable buildings in the 500 block of York Road on the east side of the street are problematical not only because of alterations but because of additions and the degree to which buildings share foundations, walls, etc. These buildings were erected in the late 19th century and early 20th century on an historic site.

The history of the entire block is an interesting one. On the 1853 Zur Horst map one can see that the "Hotel" occupies a trapezoidal lot bounded on the West by York Road, on the North by Joppa Road and on the East by Hillen Road. A five acre lot being offered by Benjamin Payne as a possible site for the new Court House lies to the South. On the 1877 Atlas it can be seen that much development took place during the next twenty-four years or so after 1853 including the laying out of streets and lots in a gridiron plan with a North-South axis. The hotel, however, remains on its large irregular lot which forms nearly an entire block and it appears to be using all of that space except for a tiny parcel on Pennsylvania Avenue containing the newspaper office of W. H. Ruby. In addition to the hotel itself there are several large outbuildings. Deeds and old plats indicate that these buildings included at least the stables necessary for boarding travelers & horses, and a stone springhouse.

In its time Towson has had several hotels and taverns which were logical and necessary establishments in a town that was both a crossroads service center and county seat. The hotel which stood on this site until 1929, however, is believed to have been the oldest having been built by the Towsons in the 1760's. That roads, including the important York Turnpike, were laid out relative to the building's location and that it was an important gathering place for over a century and a half are facts which gave it tremendous significance as a landmark.

By 1898, however, the hotel no longer dominated the large and centrally located lot. The Bromley Atlas of that year shows that in addition to the little newspaper office two other larger buildings which had their own outbuildings were constructed facing York Road. The southernmost is labeled as belonging to J. German and the northernmost is Towson National Bank. Parts of these buildings are believed to remain today being contained in Robinson's Liquor store (Bank) and the Kent Lounge. By the time of the 1920's America had become "motorized" and Towson had become suburbanized. Hotels, at least outside of the city, gave way to motels or "motor courts" as they were first called. The landmark which had dominated this block and which had indeed helped to foster the town itself was razed in 1929 and replaced by a movie theatre and shops.

Little or nothing remains of the era in which this block was one of Towson's open spaces occupied only by the necessities of the hotel except, that is, for the irregular shape of the block itself. The only open spaces are the asphalted parking lots behind the more than twenty commercial structures of the block. There are two buildings which were late 19th century neighbors to the hotel and along with the movie theatre are the only structures of the block currently being recorded (1977-78).

TITLE SEARCH for ROBINSON'S

Liber 4828, Folio 425 November 14, 1967

Grantor: E. Gertrude Seiwel

Grantee: Alexander J. Clark

"Beginning...east side of Baltimore and York Turnpike Road at a point
...in second line of lot...located at end of fifth line of that lot
of ground...conveyed by Joshua F. Cockey to Andrew Jackson German...
from the face of the west wall of a stone spring house...known as
No. 510 York Road."

Liber 3597, Folio 535 August 15, 1959

Grantor: Towson Theatre, Co.

Grantee: Porter. G. Seiwel and E. Gertrude Seiwel

Liber 650, Folio 439 November 1, 1927

Grantor: William M. Koerner & wife

Grantee: Towson Theatre, Co.

Liber 642, Folio 510 April 4, 1927

Grantor: Baltimore County Bank

Grantee: William E. Koerner & wife

Liber 449, Folio 182 July 2, 1915

Grantor: Towson National Bank

Grantee: Baltimore County Bank

Liber 159, Folio 29 February 9, 1887

Grantor: Mary E. Ady et.al.

Grantee: Towson National Bank

Equity Docket 7, Folio 197 Case # 4265 June 21, 1880

Judicial Record 177, Folio 311 *

Liber 118, Folio 502 June 11, 1880

Grantor: Joshua F. Cockey & wife Deed in Trust

Grantee: Mary E. & Virginia Ady

Liber 117, Folio 525 June 23, 1880 Small portion of said land

First Part: Joshua F. Cockey

Second Part: Mary E. & Virginia Ady

Third Part: Louisa E Lee Exec. of Will & Testament of Daniel Lee

Fourth Part: A. Jackson German

Liber 112, Folio 225 June 10, 1879
Grantor: Samuel F. Butler Deed of Assignment
Grantee: Mary E. & Virginia A. Ady

Liber 112, Folio 253 June 18, 1879
Grantor: Samuel M. Ady Admin.
Grantee: Samuel Butler

Liber 49, Folio 144 June 8, 1866
Grantor: Benjamin W. Payne Lease to
Grantee: Edward Ady

Liber 11, Folio 428 April 27, 1855
Grantor: Benjamin Payne
Grantee: Francis & Edward Ady et.al.

"Beginning...stone planted on the east side of the Hillen Road
supposed to be a tract of land called "James Meadows"..."

*JUDICIAL RECORD 171, FOLIO 311

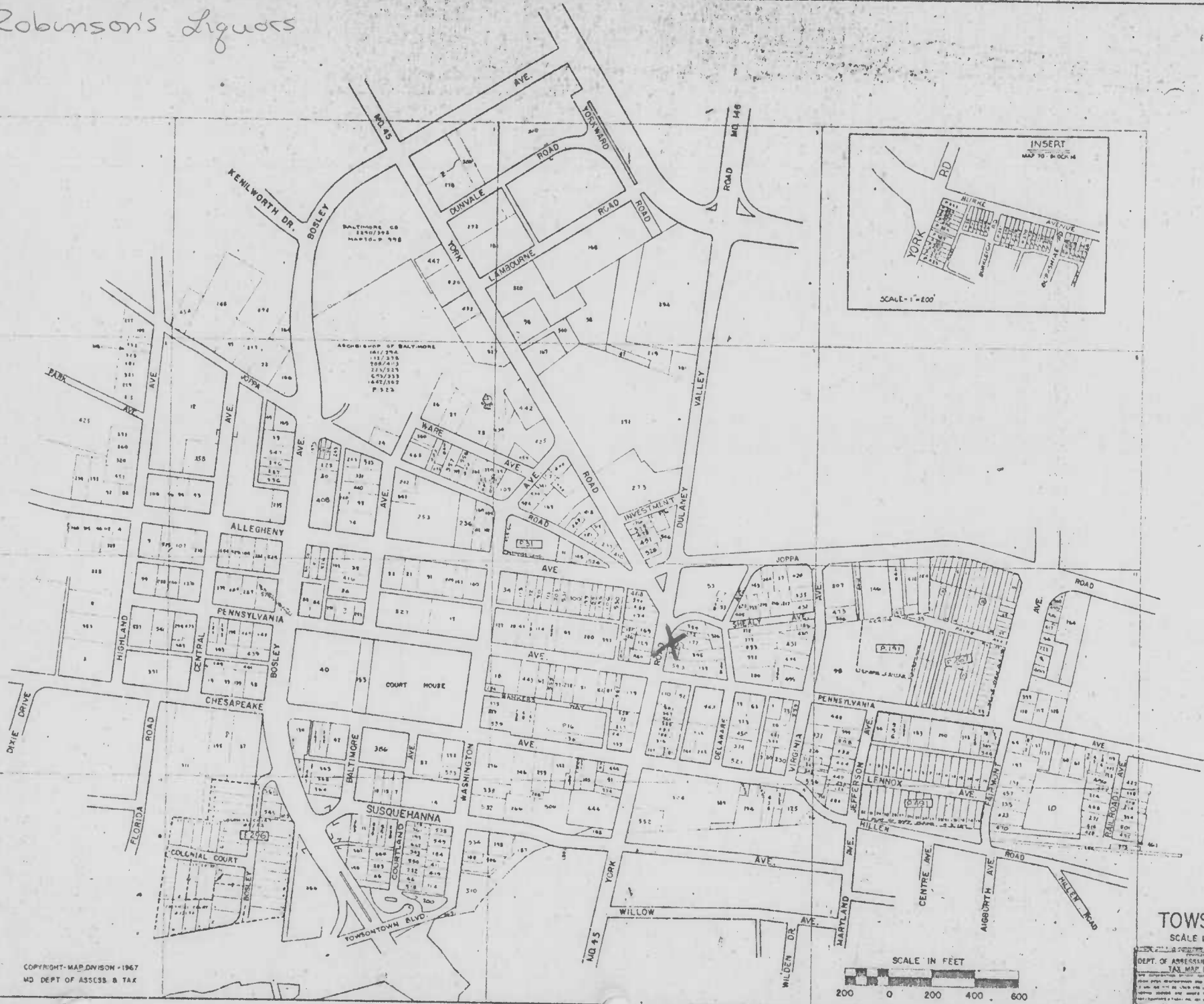
Petition of Mary Ady mentions:

"...said hotel and the buildings upon said property are badly in
need of repairs; that it is necessary to its preservation new spouting
be put upon it at once, some new flooring be put down, the porches
be repaired and certain improvements be made to the stabling on said
property."

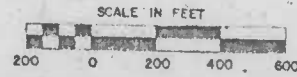
This also contains a list about conveyances ie. - Andrew German, 1880;
William Ruby, 1881; Towson National Bank, 1887.

Robinson's Liquors

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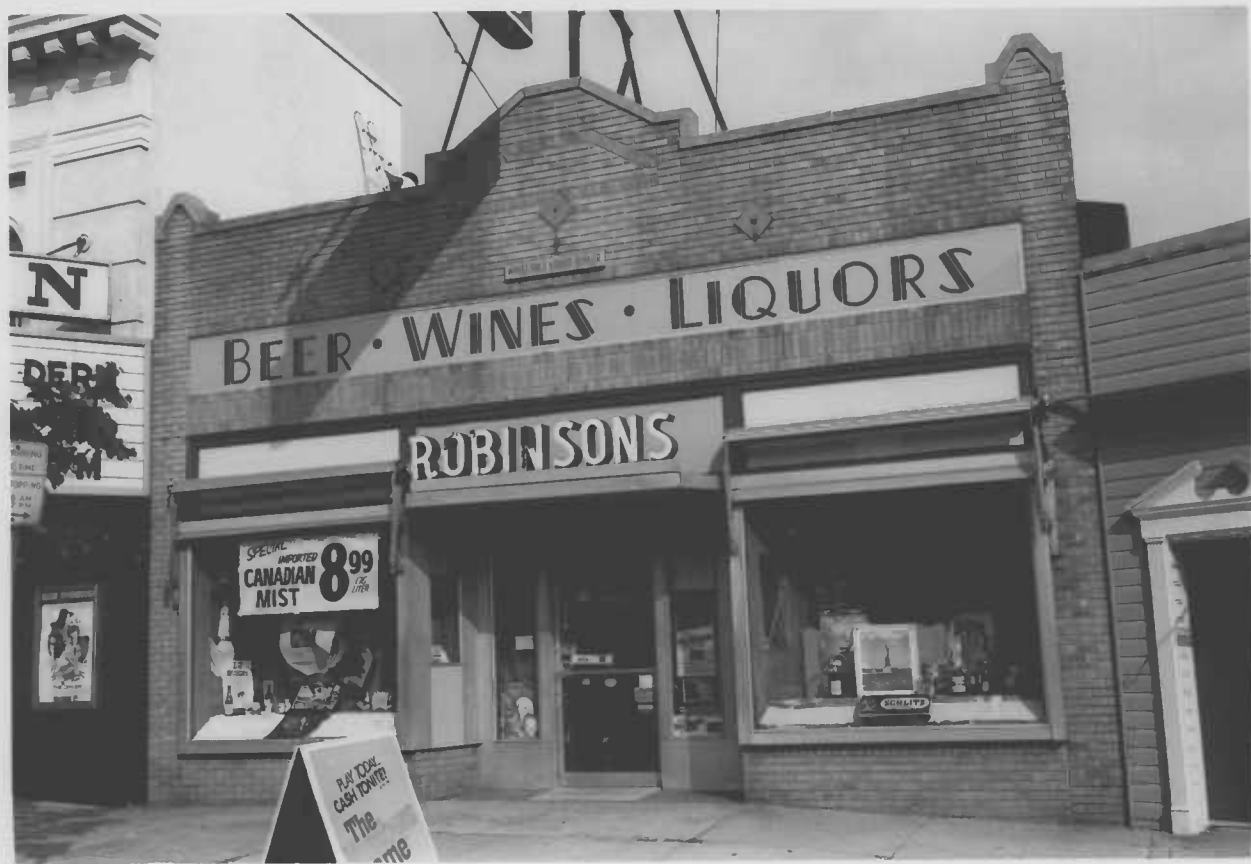
COPYRIGHT-MAP DIVISION-1967
MD DEPT OF ASSESS & TAX



TOWSON
SCALE 1"=200'

DEPT. OF ASSESSMENTS & TAXATION
BAL. MAP DIVISION

MAP NO.
70A



BA-1458

ROBINSON'S LIQUORS

W. FACADE

W. NIELD

9/78